



Utah Commission on Volunteers – Utah Citizen Corps Council

GUIDELINES FOR ESTABLISHING A CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL IN UTAH

Citizen Corps Councils exist at the national, state, regional, area and local levels. Currently there are over 2,000 Citizen Corps Councils serving in 56 states, territories and tribes, reaching 72% of the American people. There are different types of Citizen Corps Councils, based upon the area and population they serve:

- ❑ The most common type of local Citizen Corps Councils are County and City (or Town) Citizen Corps Councils. Some local Citizen Corps Councils are established by groups of local organizations and citizens joining together to help make their communities safer, stronger and better prepared.
- ❑ Area Citizen Corps Councils consist of (usually smaller) municipalities and/or communities that have joined together to form a Citizen Corps Council, most often within the same county. Ideally, Area Citizen Corps Councils support and are supported by their County Citizen Corps Council.
- ❑ Regional Citizen Corps Councils usually represent an area larger than a single County, and are usually made up of representatives from several counties that are geographically contiguous, and/or from a variety of organizations within those counties.

Administratively, in Utah there are two categories of Citizen Corps Councils: **Associate** Citizen Corps Councils and **Charter** Citizen Corps Councils.

Becoming an “Associate Citizen Corps Council”

The first step in becoming a Citizen Corps Council in Utah is to register with the National Citizen Corps Council by completing the on-line Citizen Corps application found at www.citizencorps.gov. Click on the “Citizen Corps Council” icon at the top of the page, and then click on the “Register Your Council” choice on the left-hand side of the page. Complete all the requested information in the on-line registration, including a description of your new Citizen Corps Council along with its goals and objectives. Submit your registration by clicking on the “submit” icon.

After you have submitted your electronic registration with the National Citizen Corps Council, the National Citizen Corps Council will notify the Utah State Citizen Corps Council that you have registered. The Utah Citizen Corps Council will contact the person identified as the “Point of Contact” for your local Citizen Corps Council, as well as the Public Official indicated in your registration. At that point, you may be asked to provide some additional information about your Citizen Corps Council, its goals and objectives, and how it plans to accomplish them. You will be notified by the Utah Citizen Corps Council when your organization has been accepted as an “Associate Citizen Corps Council”.

Becoming a Citizen Corps Council does not automatically include grant funding. Associate Citizen Corps Councils are eligible to apply for a “start-up” Planning Grant of up to \$1,000 from the Utah Citizen Corps Council.



Becoming a “Charter Citizen Corps Council”

It is significantly more challenging to become a **“Charter Citizen Corps Council”**. The Utah Citizen Corps Council grants “Charters” to Associate Citizen Corps Councils that have demonstrated an ability to motivate citizens and organize community resources to achieve the Citizen Corps goal of making communities safer, stronger and better prepared.

Generally, demonstrating an ability to motivate citizens and organize community resources would involve providing some documentation of successful performance within the following areas:

1. A Council Plan for strengthening the Community, which includes Goals, Objectives and Activities not only for the current year but which also shows how the current years’ activities relate to those envisioned for subsequent years.
2. Support of Citizen Corps “Pillar Programs”: A description of how the local Citizen Corps Council is involved with and supporting one or more of the “Pillar Programs” identified by the Utah Citizen Corps Council – Neighborhood Watch (NW), Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT), Medical Reserve Corps (MRC), Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS), Fire Corps (FC).
3. Community partnerships: Functioning and successful “partnering” with a variety of community organizations and/or political jurisdictions, as evidenced by meetings attended, objectives achieved, goals accomplished and by written Memoranda of Understanding & Agreement.
4. Local political and/or community support as evidenced by a Resolution passed by the sponsoring and participating political jurisdictions (usually incorporated municipalities and/or counties) or sponsoring and participating community organizations.
5. Strengthening the Citizen Corps structure: Evidence that the local Citizen Corps Council is working together with other local, area and regional Citizen Corps Councils, and with the Utah Citizen Corps Council, to ensure the statewide success of the Citizen Corps mission of personal responsibility for Preparing, Training and Volunteering.
6. Consistency of performance and progress: The programs and activities engaged in by the Citizen Corps Council are, in fact, what was proposed in its application and planning documents. Any changes made subsequent to the original application have been made with the approval of the membership of the local Citizen Corps Council and the Utah Citizen Corps Council. This is especially important if the local Council has received or is receiving funding from the Utah Citizen Corps Council.
7. Accountability, Reporting and Performance Measurement: reporting Citizen Corps Council activities, programs and achievements to the Utah Citizen Corps Council, including pre-identified, measurable criteria.
8. Council By-Laws: An approved set of By-Laws which have proven to be an effective guide for the operation of the local Citizen Corps Council.



The Utah Citizen Corps Council will provide assistance in completing the application process (Request for Charter) to any Associate Citizen Corps Council wishing to apply for State Accreditation as a Charter Citizen Corps Council. ***Note: All Citizen Corps Councils currently serving should apply for Citizen Corps Accreditation as a Charter Citizen Corps Council.**

Charter Citizen Corps Councils may apply for both Planning Grants and Program Grants that reflect the comprehensiveness and maturity of their Citizen Corps program.

Guidelines for Regional (and Area) Citizen Corps Councils

The Utah Citizen Corps Council both lauds and encourages collaborative community coalitions and partnerships, and recognizes the benefits that can be realized in situations favorable to the establishment and activity of a Regional Citizen Corps Council. It also encourages that the relationship, both programmatic and fiscal, between the RCCC and its constituent member organizations be clearly described and understood by all participating partners.

When the Utah Citizen Corps Council receives a "Request for Charter" from a Regional Citizen Corps Council (RCCC), the essential element it will be looking for is the existence of real, functioning, collaborative partnerships between the Regional CCC and the member jurisdictions and/or organizations which it includes and serves. These 'partnering' relationships should be evidenced initially by Resolutions of Support by the governing body of the member jurisdictions or organizations, or Memoranda of Understanding/Agreement between each member jurisdiction/organization and the RCCC, which accompany the Request for Charter and/or the Application for Funding. The continuing existence and health of these partnerships should be evidenced in the meeting minutes of the RCCC (attendance, participation, activities, goals/objectives achieved, etc.), which should also accompany the Request for Charter or Application for Funding. The constructive and collaborative nature of these partnerships should also be documented and described by an accompanying narrative.

The Request for Charter and/or Application for Funding submitted by a Regional Citizen Corps Council should also clearly describe the nature of the financial relationship between the RCCC and their constituent members, especially if they include one-or-more local Citizen Corps Councils or member political jurisdictions (counties, cities, towns) and/or coalitions of community organizations that could apply to become a local Citizen Corps Council.

For example, some Regional Citizen Corps Councils are clear that one of their primary objectives is to encourage the creation of local Citizen Corps Councils within their region, which would then apply for their *own* grant funding. Such RCCCs realize that as the number of individually-funded local Citizen Corps Councils increases within the region, the amount of funding needed by the RCCC would be expected to diminish, as the new local CCCs assume more-and-more of their own program costs. This financial relationship (i.e., that the RCCC will be establishing new local CCCs that will then seek their own grant funding rather than continuing financial dependence upon the RCCC) should be clear in the Request for Charter and/or Application for Funding.



By contrast, if the financial relationship between the RCCC and its constituent organizations is that all Citizen Corps funding must go to the Regional Citizen Corps Council for distribution to local member organizations, that relationship must be explicitly expressed in the Request for Charter and/or Application for Funding, including the acceptance of that relationship by member organizations and jurisdictions. Constituent members of a Regional Citizen Corps Council which has been funded based upon that membership must understand that they will not be eligible to apply for their own, individual grant from the State Citizen Corps Council during the grant performance period of the Regional Citizen Corps Council of which they are member.

The nature of the programmatic and fiscal arrangement between a Regional Citizen Corps Council and the Area and Local Citizen Corps Councils within that region should be clearly described in the Charter and Funding Applications of each of the Councils involved, to insure that roles and responsibilities are mutually understood and to encourage collaborative rather than competitive relationships between participating partners. The same principles are also applicable to the jurisdictions and organizations that may be forming a coalition of partners to establish an Area Citizen Corps Council.